

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 /066 W

----- 011164

R 141645Z MAR 76

FM AMCONSUL OPORTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 813

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

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AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

DIA WASHDC

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO

SUBJ: OPORTO MEETING OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS

REF: OPORTO 0103 (DTG 101655Z MAR 76)

SUMMARY: OPORTO MEETING OF EUROPEAN SOCIALIST LEADERS OPENED
MAR 13 ON NOTE OF CONTROVERSY WITH RIVAL DEMONSTRATION BY
POPULAR DEMOCRATS (PPD), SCATTERED POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND
GENERAL LABOR UNREST. HOWEVER, INITIAL REACTION HERE AFTER FIRST
DAY IS THAT SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED BY INTER-
NATIONAL DISPLAY OF SOLIDARITY AT COST OF PPD AND FUTURE PPD/PS
COOPERATION. END SUMMARY.

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1. POLITICAL VIOLENCE: LARGE BOMB PLACED BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS EXPLODED BEFORE DAWN MAR 13 IN FRONT OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER (CDS) HEADQUARTERS IN OPORTO. EXPLOSION HEAVILY DAMAGED CDS BUILDING, BLEW OUT WINDOWS IN 300 FOOT RADIUS AND RUINED SEVERAL CARS WITHOUT CAUSING PERSONAL INJURIES. BOMBING ADDED TO TENSION AT START OF WEEKEND EVENTS. STREET FIGHTING ERUPTED DURING AFTERNOON PPD RALLY IN DOWNTOWN OPORTO WHEN BANDS OF YOUTH WEARING PS INSIGNIAS TRIED TO TEAR APART PPD PROGAGANDA BOOTH NEAR RALLY SITE. BOOTH WAS FINALLY DESTROYED AFTER RALLY DISBANDED. I NOTED SEVERAL INJURED BY FISTS AND PRESS REPORT FOUR WERE HOSPITALIZED. THERE WAS ALSO CONFRONTATION AT OPORTO AIRPORT WHEN PS MILITANTS TRIED TO PREVENT PPD SUPPORTERS FROM PAINTING AND POSTERING. POLICE APPARENTLY ENDED INCIDENT WITHOUT INJURIES BEING CAUSED.

2. POPULAR DEMOCRATIC RALLY: AFTERNOON CROWD OF OVER 15,000 PPD SUPPORTERS HEARD PPD SECGEN SA CARNEIRO DENOUNCE PS FOR ATTEMPTING TO "MONPOLIZE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT AND PRIME MINISTER PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO." SA CARNEIRO ACCUSED SOCIALISTS FOR ACTING LIKE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS ABROAD BUT BEING SOCIAL MARXISTS AT HOME. DESPITE THESE CHARGES, SA CARNEIRO LEFT DOOR OPEN TO PPD PARTICIPATION IN COALITION GOVERNMENT WITH OTHER DEMOCRATIC PARTIES DEPENDING ON ELECTION RESULTS.

3. LABOR UNREST: ATTEMPT BY RETAIL TRADE UNION TO CLOSE OPORTO SHOPS MAR 13 HAD NO IMPACT ON SOCIALIST MEETING. STRIKE FAILED IN THE FACE OF DETERMINED RESISTANCE BY SHOPKEEPERS. THERE WAS NO REPITITION OF STRIKE SEVERAL MONTHS AGO WHEN LEFTIST PICKETS CLASHED WITH SHOP OWNERS. HOWEVER, NURSES, SOME TRANSPORT WORKERS, PHARMACY AND RETAIL EMPLOYEES REMAIN ON STRIKE IN VARYING DEGREE. LOCAL BUSINESSMEN REPORT CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS ACROSS THE BOARD WITH LABOR. MAIN THRUST OF LABOR UNREST DOES NOT APPEAR DIRECTED AGAINST MANAGEMENT BUT MORE THE RESULT OF COMPETITION BETWEEN VARIOUS UNIONS WHICH IS MANIPULATED, ACCORDING TO SEVERAL SOURCES, BY LEFTIST UNION LEADERS.

4. SOCIALIST SUMMIT: EUROPEAN SOCIALIST MEETING GOT OFF TO MOMENTOUS START WITH 25,000 PS SUPPORTERS OVERFLOWING OPORTO'S CRYSTAL PALACE FOR EVENING RALLY MAR 13. ACCORDING TO AMCONSUL OBSERVER, DEMONSTRATION WAS NOTABLE ON TWO COUNTS: CHEER AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ENTHUSIASM BY PARTICIPANTS IN DISPLAY OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY BEHIND PS AND STRONG CRITICISM NOT SO MUCH AGAINST PPD BUT OF PPD LEADER SA CARNEIRO AND WHAT MARIO SOARES TERMED "SA CARNEIRO'S OBSTINACY." BRANDT, PALME AND SPANISH SOCIALIST FILIPO GONZALEZ WERE PARTICULARLY CHEERED. LOCAL PRESS NOTED THAT FOREIGN DELEGATES APPEARED SOMEWHAT BEWILDERED OVER CONFLICT WITH PPD. BRANDT DIPLOMATICALLY DOWNPLAYED EMPHASIS ON PARTY POLITICS AND INSTEAD SPOKE MORE BROADLY IN TERMS OF "INTERNATIONAL

SUPPORT TO PEOPLE OF PORTUGAL." AS HEAD OF COMMITTEE OF SOLIDARITY
AND DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL, BRANDT WAS PLEASED TO HAVE
"MORE DIRECT CONTACT WITH DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST EXPERIENCE
IN PORTUGAL."

5 COMMENT: AFTER FIRST DAYS EVENTS SURROUDNING EUROPEAN
SOCIALST SUMMIT, LOCAL OBSERVERS CONSIDER THAT PS POSITION
HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED BY INTERNATIONAL DISPLAY OF SOLIDARITY.
FAILURE OF BRITISH LABOR PARTY TO SEND REPRESENTATIVE HAS BEEN
IGNORED. ACTIONS BY PPD SEC GEN SA CARNEIRO IN PROTESTING
SOCIALIST MEETING ARE VIEWED IN TERMS OF SOUR-GRAPES AND OVER
REACTION. SCATTERED CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PPD MILITANTS AND
PS (OR COMMUNISTS IN PS GUISE) WILL MAKE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE
TWO PARTIES DIFFICULT. BY REMAINING TOTALLY ALOOF, AND AS
INJURED PARTY IN BOMBING, CDS MAY HAVE PICKED UP A FEW VOTES.
PENNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SOCIALISM, PARTY MEETINGS, PARTY LEADERS, POLITICAL PARTIES, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OPORTO00107
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760096-0973
From: OPORTO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760362/aaaaccwl.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 OPORTO 103
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 FEB 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <05 AUG 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPORTO MEETING OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, PPD, PS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006